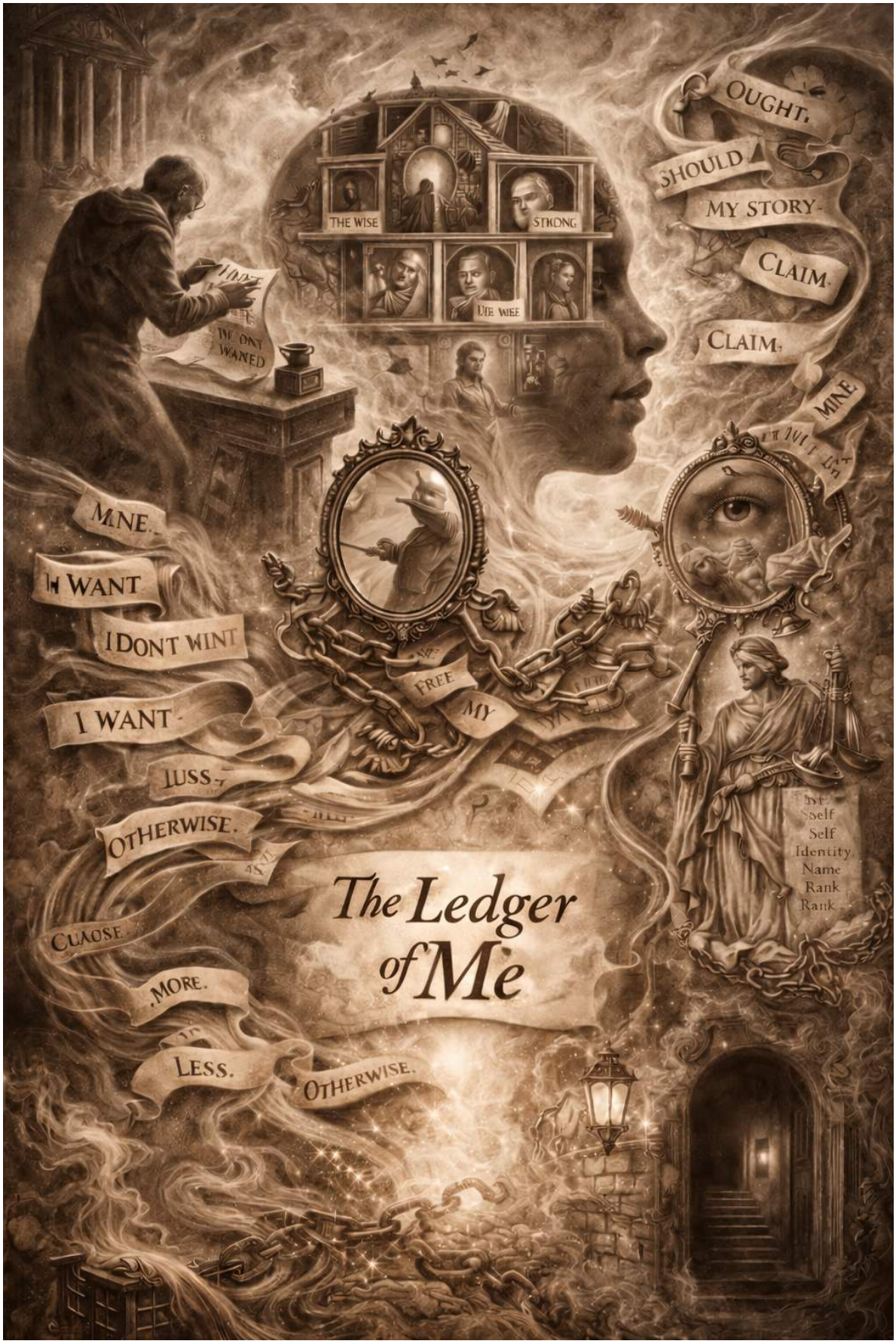
OUGHT.
SHOULD
MY STORY.
CLAIM.
CLAIM.
MINE
THE WISE
STRONG
DIE WIEE
I DONT WANED
MINE.
I WANT
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LUSS.
OTHERWISE.
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MORE.
LESS.
OTHERWISE.
FREE
MY
The Ledger of Me
Self
Self
Identity
Name
Rank
Rank

The Ledger of Me

Within the hush of early light, ere day hath learned to gleam,

A whisper wakes, a wisp that makes a kingdom of a dream;

No trumpet sounds, no banners wave, no herald's solemn plea,

Yet in the silence, sudden violence: thus, is born a me.

A footfall, faint; a shadow's slant; a memory's quick sting,

And through the ribs there runs, there comes, a tightening, iron ring;

Not pain enough to cry aloud, not grief enough to see,

But small insistence, sly persistence, forging "mine" from "me."

A feeling, fleet, takes chair and seat, as guest of joy or rue;

Then hungry thought, with velvet wrought, leans close as if it knew:

"More—give me more," "Less—make it less," "Let otherwise it be,"

And lo, the leaning crowns its meaning: thus, is born a me.

The mind, that clerk in candle-dark, begins its secret art,

With ink of want and stamp of taunt it labels every part:

"This pleases," "That offends," "This serves," "That wounds," "This sets me free,"

And all the while, with crafty smile, it signs the page: "me."

It builds with haste a room of taste, a hall of ought and should,

It frames with care a face to wear, as if the mask were good:

The wise, the strong, the wronged, the longed-for, the one who must agree—

A posture taken, fate awaken'd: thus, is born a me.

And if another's calmer weather makes no reverence for thy claim,

If question falls like winter hail upon thy guarded name,

Then sparks arise in sharpened eyes, a frozen "How dare thee,"

For truth is slight when rank takes flight: thus, is born a me.

Yet mark it well: the tale may tell of facts that stand as stone,

But what is said is less the head than throne-work for a throne;

For even truth, in gilded booth, can serve as lock and key

To keep unbroken, never spoken, that fragile thing called me.

So, day by day, in measured play, the self is set and set—

Re-stated, weighted, celebrated, feared to be forgot;

A picture hung with careful tongue, a nail of certainty,

And all this care is secret prayer for one more breath of me.

But sit thee still. Let time fulfill its quiet, ruthless task;

Watch closely where the mind lays bare the seam beneath the mask.

Between one thought and the next thought there yawns a grain-thin sea,

A gap of bright, unclaimed delight—no “mine,” no “I,” no me.

Then comes the shock, the thunder-knock that splits the looking glass:

The “me” thou’st fed, and dread, and wed, is but a trick that pass’d—

A habit’s house, midair arous’d, upheld by craving’s spree…

And when it’s seen—clean, keen, obscene—it falls, and there is no “me.”